

**North Dakota**

# **STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL**

*A NEW HORIZON FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES*

## **Annual Report to the Governor FFY 2008**



### **North Dakota Department Of Human Services Vocational Rehabilitation Consulting and Services:**

- Assists Individuals With Disabilities To Improve Their Employment Opportunities.
- Assists Businesses In Solving Disability-Related Issues.

***Cover Art Featuring North Dakota's Energy and Agriculture:***

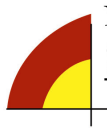
*Harvest*, Grand Forks, Ronald F. Fischer

*Wind Generator Sunset*, South of Minot, Rick Craig

*Oil Well at Sunset*, Kim M. Giraldo

*Sunset in Coal Country*, Falkirk Mine, Rick Craig

Source: <http://www.nd.gov/>



North Dakota

## STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

*A NEW HORIZON FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES*



north dakota  
department of  
human services

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To the Governor and Citizens of North Dakota:

We are pleased to present to you the North Dakota State Rehabilitation Council's Annual Report to the Governor for 2008. The NDSRC is proud of its efforts to improve services and quality of life for individuals with disabilities in North Dakota. North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) exists to provide needed resources for individuals with disabilities, as well as for business owners and employers who deal with disability-related issues in the workplace. These efforts also contribute to workforce development in North Dakota, which is critical to maintaining a strong state economy. The cover of this report represents some of the key state industries, energy and agriculture.

This report outlines many significant achievements made by the Council and the North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation Division of the Department of Human Services. You will see not only the broad array of services provided, but most importantly, the results achieved.

This year, 903 individuals with disabilities were successfully employed following receipt of NDVR services; and many others received specialized services through other NDVR programs. North Dakota is among the national leaders in percentage of individuals with disabilities who are employed. In comparison to other states, NDVR is also a leader in the percentage of individuals who work at or nearly full-time and receive employer-provided medical insurance. These outcomes demonstrate a real cost benefit for ND taxpayers.

Thank you for your review of the Annual Report. Please contact us if you have questions or would like further information.

Respectfully,

Jeff Davis, Chairperson  
State Rehabilitation Council

Respectfully,

Nancy McKenzie, Director  
Vocational Rehabilitation





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# **Vocational Rehabilitation Consulting & Services**

## **VISION**

Vocational Rehabilitation Consulting & Services is the leader in disability-related solutions.

## **PURPOSE**

Vocational Rehabilitation Consulting & Services assists individuals with disabilities to improve their employment opportunities  
and  
Assists businesses in solving disability-related issues.

## **GUIDING PRINCIPLES**

Serving our clients is the primary focus of everything we do.  
All people have value regardless of age, race, creed, color, gender, or disability.

Good communication is essential to delivering quality rehabilitation services.

Quality outcomes are a result of the commitment of clients and qualified staff working together towards mutually agreed upon goals.

Change is inevitable and provides opportunities for innovation and creativity.

Effective partnerships are critical in achieving results for clients.

Informed choice is central to sound decision-making and allows decisions to be based on all relevant information, options, and consequences.

When all things are equal and legal,  
Decisions will be made in favor of the client.





# North Dakota State Rehabilitation Council

FFY 2008

***The purpose of the State Rehabilitation Council is to advise Vocational Rehabilitation regarding services to individuals with disabilities.***

The North Dakota State Rehabilitation Council (NDSRC) works to assist North Dakotans with disabilities. The purpose of the NDSRC is to work in partnership with the Director of North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation (NDVR) on issues concerning policy and program, delivery of services, and methods for reaching potential consumers.

The NDSRC:

- Informs and advises NDVR on the effects its programs have on North Dakota consumers and business.
- Facilitates public input for the VR state plan.
- Advocates for consumer rights and services.
- Communicates to public and community leaders the purpose and need for Vocational Rehabilitation.



*North Dakota State Capitol Building*

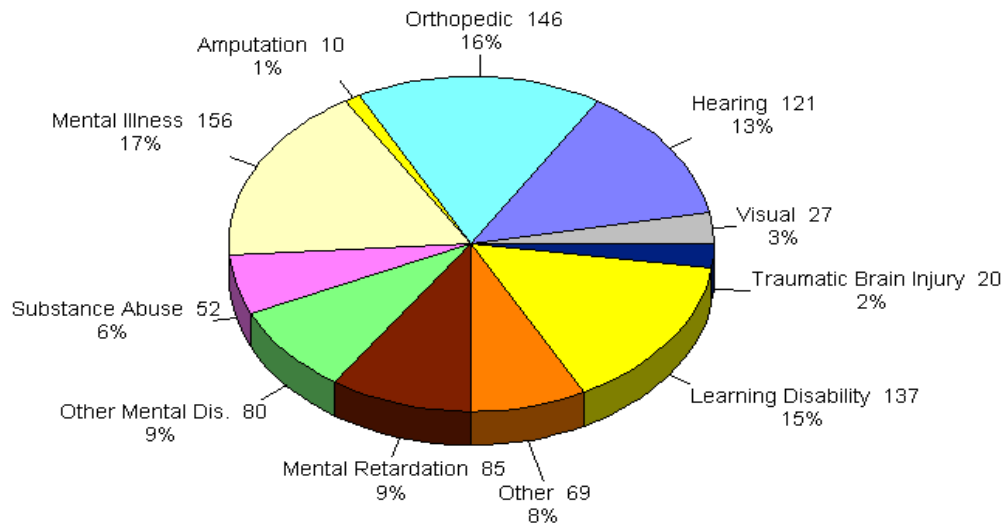
The 23 Council members are selected to serve on the NDSRC by the Governor of North Dakota on the basis of their interest, knowledge, and understanding of the needs of individuals with disabilities. Members are advocates for equal opportunities in their communities and in North Dakota for individuals with disabilities. This advocacy is reflected through their work on the following standing committees and ad hoc committee:

## **The Evaluation Committee:**

- Recommended support of the new supported employment best practice guidelines and payment rates.
- Reviewed the results of the VR consumer satisfaction surveys each quarter.
- Reviewed, analyzed, and advised NDVR regarding program performance and policy issues each quarter.
- Assisted in the development of this Annual Report to the Governor.



## Primary Disabilities of Persons Achieving Employment North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation FFY 2008



*Information also referenced on Page 25 in VR at a Glance.*

### **The Planning Committee:**

- Assisted in the preparation of the State Plan, Strategic Plan, and amendments to the plans.
- Assisted with public hearings to solicit input from consumers, family members, and the public regarding the effectiveness of NDVR services.
- Reviewed public comments and made recommendations to the full Council for their review and action.

### **The Resource Committee:**

- Monitored the progress of the Comprehensive System of Personnel Development to ensure compliance with the Federal Rehabilitation Services Administration mandate.
- Reviewed progress toward meeting Qualified Rehabilitation Professional Standards for all counselors within the Strategic Plan timeframe.
- Supported the implementation of additional supervisor training for Regional Administrators.
- Continued to work on counselor classifications.

### **The Public Relations Committee:**

- Provided consultation and support to VR on its public awareness initiatives. These initiatives are the result of public input and subsequent recommendations from the SRC.



### The Ad Hoc Legislative Committee:

- Reviewed legislation throughout the year that could have an impact on disability-related issues.
- Took steps to work with the Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) Legislative Committee during the next legislative session.

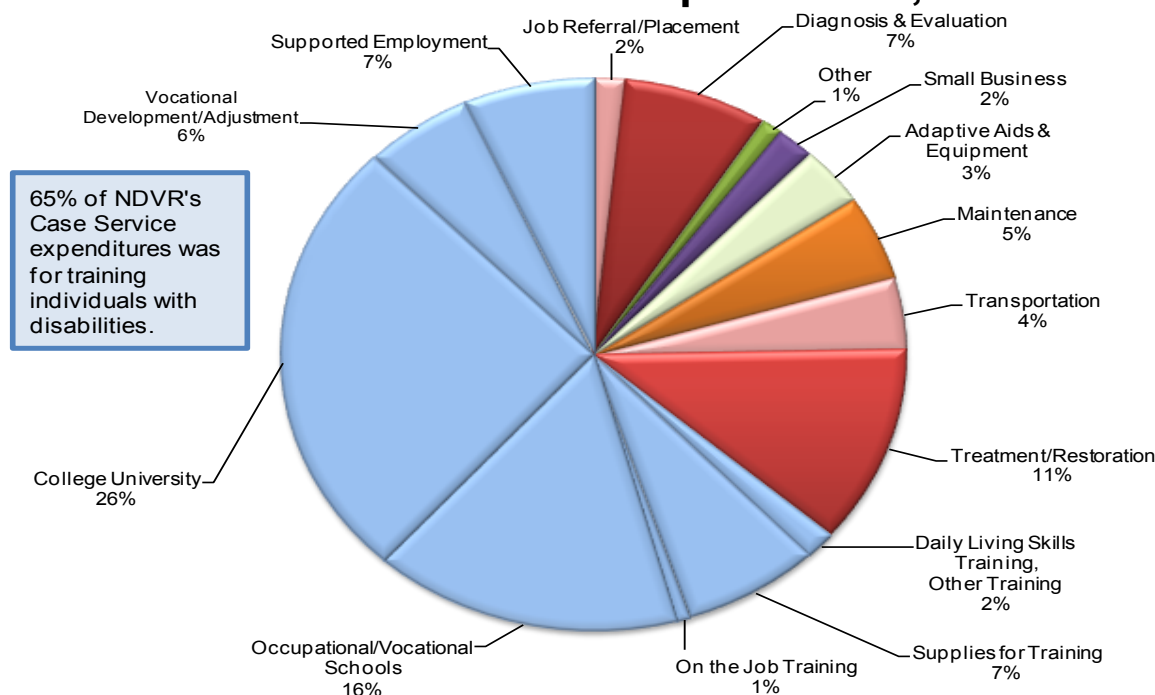
### In FFY 2008, the NDSRC also made several recommendations to VR including the following:

- Recommended NDVR equity pay adjustments be reviewed after DHS completes its analysis of positions and compensation.
- Recommended VR counselors should not be promoted from a II to a III position until they have passed the CRC test.
- Recommended VR Regional Administrators be surveyed about training they have received as administrators.
- Recommended VR offer training for new and existing supervisors.
- Recommended VR consider funding a special project for individuals with traumatic brain injuries.

*"[My counselor] is an excellent counselor and motivator. I am where I am today because of her!"*

Comment from VR Satisfaction Survey

### NDVR Case Service Expenditures, 2008





- Recommended VR develop program materials that are culturally specific. Any materials developed for a specific population or ethnicity should have representatives from those groups in the development process.
- Recommended VR continue to evaluate the new Supported Employment payment schedule that was implemented on October 1, 2007.
- Recommended VR continue working with high school Transition Teams and college staff to encourage students with severe disabilities to accumulate a variety of work experiences during the high school and college years.
- Recommended VR consider developing and funding a pilot project which would assist individuals with goal-related employment as they pursue their post-secondary education.
- Recommended VR consider developing a separate, interactive website to provide informational materials about VR for teens, young adults and parents.
- Recommended VR continue its ongoing public education messages regarding employment services, rural services, vision services, etc.
- Recommended VR review and possibly revise its website to make it easier to navigate for individuals and employers seeking information regarding VR services.
- Recommended VR staff expand potential referral sources to include Occupational Therapists, Physical Therapists, hospitals, rehab centers, and specific disability groups, and ensure printed materials are widely distributed to various agencies and referral sources.
- Recommended VR develop staff training and awareness regarding traumatic brain injury, employment, functional limitations, employment outcomes, etc.
- Recommended VR continue to focus on the comprehensive assessment component, and review and implement recommendations of the VR Assessment Workgroup and/or other entities.
- Recommended that the SRC chair attend the November CSAVR meeting.
- Recommended that VR send two SRC members to NDSRC training.
- Recommended that SRC block time at 3 quarterly meetings to review and discuss RSA training modules dealing with the State Plan and Quality Assurance.
- Encouraged VR staff to participate in public gatherings, including conferences, meetings, conventions, school events, etc.
- Encouraged VR staff to develop and maintain collaborative relationships with agencies that serve veterans, new Americans, Native Americans, etc.



*"[VR] helped [me] to figure out not only what I wanted to do, but also what I could do."*

Comment from VR Satisfaction Survey



## Three Assume New Roles at NDVR State Office New Assistant Director, Two New Program Administrators



Wanda Bye

**Wanda Bye** was appointed NDVR Assistant Director in June, 2008. She has been the division's Director of Field Services since 2003, and will continue to hold that position. In the role of Assistant Director, Wanda will assist Nancy McKenzie, NDVR Director, in the daily management of NDVR resources and personnel.



Cheryl Hess

**Cheryl Hess** joined the state office staff as a Program Administrator on September 1, 2008. Cheryl has a Master's Degree in Human Relations, and is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor. She is also a member of the division's *Success in Leadership* initiative. Prior to joining the state office, Cheryl was the Assistive Technology Specialist and a Rehabilitation Counselor in the Bismarck regional office for seven years. In her role as a Program Administrator, Cheryl oversees NDVR's Transition, Supported Employment, Assistive Technology, Community Rehabilitation Providers, and Ticket to Work programs and initiatives.



Helen Baumgartner

**Helen Baumgartner** is NDVR's Older Blind Program Administrator. She also oversees the division's Randolph Sheppard and hearing programs. Helen joined the state office on October 1, 2008, after 16 years in the Bismarck regional office as a Vision Specialist. Helen has a Master's Degree in Vision Rehabilitation, and is a Certified Rehabilitation Counselor. She is also a member of the NDVR *Success in Leadership* initiative.



## Vocational Rehabilitation Employment Services

***The purpose of Vocational Rehabilitation's Employment Services is to provide training and employment services to individuals with disabilities so they can become and remain employed.***

North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation is the state's primary resource on employment for individuals with disabilities and for assisting businesses with disability-related issues.

***An estimated  
1 in 6  
North Dakotans  
has a disability.***

According to US census data, of North Dakota's estimated 642,000 residents, 97,817 individuals age 5 and over have a disability. Of these, 58,630 are of working age, between 16-64.

## Employment Highlights for FFY 2008

- 903 Vocational Rehabilitation clients became employed.
- Their average weekly wage rose from \$92.92 to \$377.46.
- 91% were still employed 9 months after they began working.
- 88% of the individuals receiving services had a significant disability.
- There was 91% satisfaction with VR services.
- For every \$1 VR spent in FFY 2008, VR clients will earn \$10.07.



## Services Provided

At any given time, approximately 4,300 people are receiving VR Services. This year, 6,472 people with various disabilities received training and rehabilitation services. On average, individuals who become employed will receive VR services for 29 months.

VR consultants provide specialized disability services for their clients and purchase a variety of medical, training, and other services through partnerships established with both the public and private sectors.

**Cost Benefit**  
For every \$1.00  
spent by VR,  
clients will pay  
back \$2.01 in  
taxes.

*"Wow! You guys are a great  
help. Thank you so much."*

Comment from VR Satisfaction Survey

## Recognizing Success

**"** I didn't think I would be able to farm again."

Roger experienced a common fear many ND farmers and ranchers have after experiencing a serious farm accident. He was paralyzed, in a wheelchair, and basically confined to home.

It took him 10 months to contact Vocational Rehabilitation, and then things started to move fast. VR helped Roger

modify his pickup and tractor so he could drive again. VR also helped purchase a cherry picker and hitch topper for the tractor so he could put his wheelchair in the back. That gave Roger self-sufficiency.

He says, "It's great. Now I can go from my wheelchair into a pickup without help...I get in the tractor and take care of things on the farm. After VR, I helped put the crop

in... I haven't gotten tired of it yet...What VR did for me cost a lot of money. It was worth the cost — many, many things I could never afford."

And what are the results? He says, "Overall, I just live better. I got my independence back."

Hooray!

*Full story in "15 Stories of Success—Impacting the Lives of North Dakotans with Disabilities—VR at Work."*





## Rehabilitation Consulting & Services — NDVR Business Services

***The purpose of Rehabilitation Consulting & Services is to provide consultation, technical assistance and information to businesses so they can have an available source of qualified employees and receive solutions to disability-related issues.***

Rehabilitation Consulting & Services (RCS) is a proactive approach to assisting the state's business community with their disability-related issues. Using employer-initiated contacts as its key measurement of success, RCS:

- ▶ Finished FFY 2008 at 109% of its performance goal
- ▶ Conducted 249 presentations with 3,110 individuals in attendance

RCS develops and builds business relationships by offering services in five key areas:

- ▶ Staffing—Recruitment and Retention
- ▶ Financial incentives
- ▶ Accessibility and accommodation options
- ▶ Education/awareness training
- ▶ Rural services

**We appreciate  
YOUR BUSINESS!**

RCS consultants continue their civic involvement and are assuming active roles in:

- ▶ Community and state service organizations
- ▶ Business and professional associations
- ▶ Charitable, non-profit groups

As a result, RCS consultants strengthen their own abilities, form collaborative working relationships with community and business leaders, and enhance the awareness of RCS as a community partner.



**FFY 2008**

**ND VR placed qualified individuals with disabilities with over 700  
businesses**

**in North Dakota and nationally.**





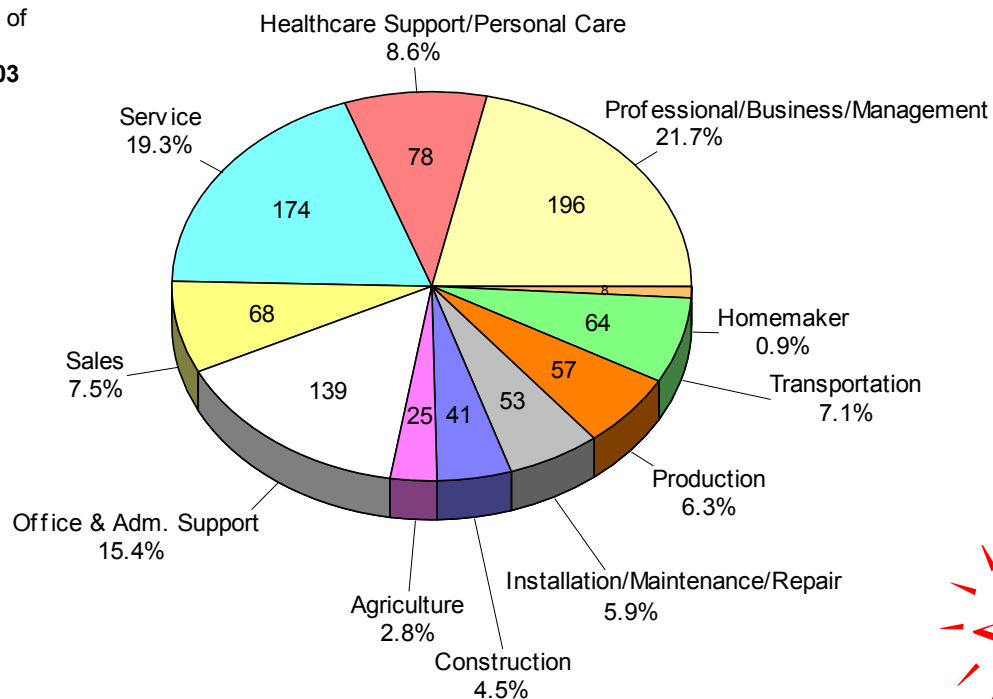
Additionally, RCS is assigned the leadership role by North Dakota's Governor in support of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). In 2007, RCS established the *RCS ADA Leadership Network* in its central office and eight regional offices to serve as the chief resource for ADA information and referrals in the state on subjects such as:

- ▶ Employment
- ▶ Accessibility
- ▶ Reasonable accommodations

RCS also works closely with the Rocky Mountain Disability Business Technical Assistance Center, the federally funded ADA technical assistance and resource center for our region. The DBTAC and RCS continue to jointly conduct educational programs, develop educational materials, and build awareness of ADA issues.

### Occupational Categories of Persons Achieving Employment ND Vocational Rehabilitation FFY 2008 Statewide

Total Number of  
Individuals  
Employed: **903**



*"My counselor was great in helping me with finding the right career, and how to achieve my goal. She kept me informed on what I needed to do and how to contact the right people to have the best chance for success."*

Comment from VR Satisfaction Survey



## NDVR And 121 Tribal VR Programs Find “Common Ground”

### Video and Brochure Enhance Program Awareness



In an effort to build on an existing collaborative relationship, NDVR and the North Dakota Tribal 121 VR Projects have come together in the creation of a 5-minute video presentation and informational brochure. Both are entitled “Common Ground”.

The video was created for broadcast on the National Indian Health Service (NIHS) pilot project, “GoodHealth System TV”. The project is a creation of KAT Communications, a Bismarck-based communications company. It places health-related information in the American Indian Health Clinics in North Dakota, South Dakota, and Nebraska through a web-based system.

The 5-minute piece features Loretta Bad Heart Bull, an American Indian small business owner and entrepreneur, discussing her personal journey as a result of her disability. She also discusses her experience working with the state and tribal VR programs.

To accent their working relationship and to enhance the number of dual cases between the two respective programs, an informational brochure was developed. The multi-page brochure defines and outlines the role of each program and the positive aspects of working with both programs. The brochure is distributed by all eight regional VR offices and by the state’s four Tribal 121 VR Projects.

While all four Tribal 121 VR Projects lent assistance in the creation of these two awareness pieces, special thanks goes out to Jon Eagle, Standing Rock Tribal 121 VR Project Director, and his staff for their significant input.



*Small business owner and entrepreneur, Loretta Bad Heart Bull, is featured in the VR-121 video presentation, “On Common Ground”.*



*“I couldn’t have done it without you! I can finally live a life that I wanted!”*

Comment from VR Satisfaction Survey



## First Ever Combined Independent Living and Vocational Rehabilitation Training Conference

The first collaborative Independent Living/Vocational Rehabilitation (IL/VR) conference in North Dakota was held October 24-26, 2007 in Minot, North Dakota. It is believed to be the first joint IL/VR Conference held in the nation.

The conference came as a result of a recommendation from a joint meeting of the State Rehabilitation Council and the Statewide Independent Living Council. The 136 conference participants included consumers, staff from the Independent Living Centers, Vocational Rehabilitation, SRC and SILC members.

## Teamwork

**Together  
We Achieve  
the  
Extraordinary**

The conference featured Dr. Monica Mayer's presentation on "Medical Aspects of the Lewis and Clark Expedition", John Johnson's presentation on the history and philosophy of the Independent Living movement, and a presentation on the multi-generational influence on today's workplace by Don Thorpe.

Conference breakout sessions included:

- Addressing Common Myths & Stereotypes Concerning Native People
- Building Community Partnerships Through Assistive Technology
- Culture of Poverty
- Ethics
- Know Your ADA Rights
- Self Advocacy
- Social Security Work Incentives
- Veterans Administration Vocational Rehabilitation



*"I am proud to say I finished school and have a good job. Everybody I talked to there were willing to try and find what I wanted to do! Thanks to you guys, I have my own siding crew and tools to start and finish a job!"*

Comment from VR Satisfaction Survey



## Solutions Using Assistive Technology

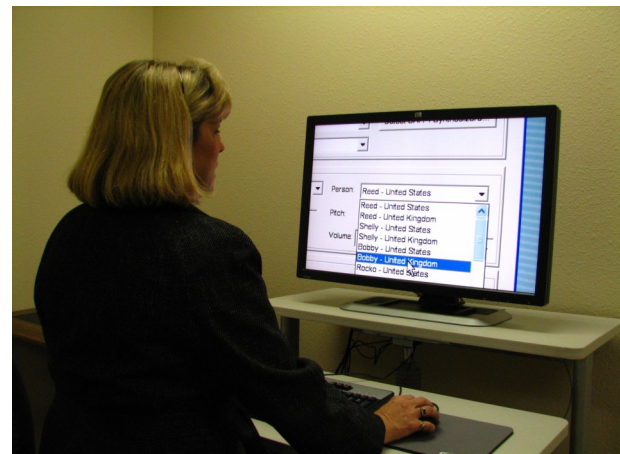


In an effort to meet a growing demand by North Dakota business owners and employees, Rehabilitation Consulting & Services (RCS) opened a new assistive technology lab in Minot.

The “SOLUTIONS using AT” Assistive Technology Lab allows employers, employees, and job seekers the opportunity to explore available technologies, and to try equipment. It also gives employers a chance to view technology that may keep productive employees on the job should they incur a disability.

The technology on display promotes independence and functionality at school and work, and covers a wide range of needs including computer access, hearing, vision, learning, memory, and organization needs.

The Minot lab is the third assistive technology lab the department has established in North Dakota, after Bismarck and Grand Forks. All labs are intended to build awareness of potential solutions to disability-related issues that affect the state’s workforce.



*Brenda Vennes, Minot RCS Consultant and AT Coordinator, was instrumental in the initiative to develop and implement a “SOLUTIONS using AT” in Minot.*

*Brenda is a member of North Dakota’s Success in Leadership program.*





## North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation Success in Leadership

### Initiative

The Success in Leadership Initiative was designed for all VR staff interested in moving into new, different or expanded roles within Rehabilitation Consulting & Services. In 2008, three new members were added to the group, filling the program's nine member capacity.

The new members to the group include Andrea Meyer, Williston Regional Administrator, Brenda Satrom, RCS Consultant and Solutions Lab Coordinator from Grand Forks, and Brenda Vennes, RCS Consultant and Assistive Technology Program Coordinator from Minot. In 2008, several members of Success in Leadership completed projects on assistive technology, employee retention, employer awards, and vision services.

*Andrea Meyer*



*Brenda Satrom*



*Brenda Vennes*



### Recognizing Success

Calling Matthew a "grease monkey" is like calling da Vinci simply an "idea man". It just doesn't do him justice. Matt is a driveline technician, a diesel tech, and he is transmission-repair qualified. He practices his "art" in a North Dakota town he loves.

Matthew became eligible for Vocational Rehabilitation because of a learning disability. He developed a strong

working relationship with his VR counselor while receiving transition services in high school. VR assisted Matt with books and tuition while he was enrolled in a two-year automotive mechanic course. After graduation, VR helped him obtain a tool box and essential tools of the trade.

Since Matt started working, he's received a raise and incentive bonuses. Now if he needs a specialized tool,

he can purchase it himself.

"This is a great program. It helps people out. I don't think they could have done any more for me. They did all I needed. That's all you can ask for."

*Full story in "15 Stories of Success—Impacting the Lives of North Dakotans with Disabilities—VR at Work".*



## NDVR and ND Department of Public Instruction Build Partnership

### Agencies Move from Transition Council to Community of Practice

Transition services for students with disabilities are an important area of attention for the state VR program and the federal government. North Dakota VR and the Department of Public Instruction (DPI) Special Education Unit continue to partner together on various projects.



Joint efforts have resulted in the move from a Transition Advisory Council to Communities of Practice. Communities of Practice (CoP) involve people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a similar passion (in this case, improving transition outcomes for young adults with disabilities), and who interact on a regular basis to learn from each other and problem solve. The mission of the ND Community of Practice for Transition is to work towards building, supporting, and sustaining community partnerships. The system promotes and improves the scope, opportunity and quality of services for youth with disabilities to adequately prepare them for life and careers beyond high school. In September 2008, Joanne Cashman, Director, The IDEA Partnership, DPI and VR held a joint ND Transition Team Meeting to begin North Dakota's transition from the Transition Advisory Council to a Community of Practice.

North Dakota's Community of Practice will focus on working across groups and localities to share information, address issues, learn together, find shared goals and define shared work, and improve practice. The state CoP structure is modeled on the national Community of Practice, of which North Dakota is a member. In the upcoming year, the group will focus on developing the CoP by inviting relevant state agencies, and identifying groups that are involved in



(Continued on page 15)

### Recognizing Success

John didn't think that Vocational Rehabilitation services applied to him. After all, those services were for people who had a disability, and he wasn't one of those people. But, because of macular degeneration, John had turned over much of the daily farm and ranch operations to his son.

With his independence being threatened, he finally

turned to VR. His counselor started by purchasing special glasses with manually-focused telescopic lenses attached to the frames. But John found it cumbersome to change from close to long range focus during calving season, so VR found a solution for John by purchasing glasses with a laser-guided, automatic focusing lens. John also needed and received a

telephone with large numbers, and a CCTV for magnifying paperwork.

John's wife expressed their appreciation for the services they received by saying, "The tax dollars are being used quite well."

*Full story in "15 Stories of Success—Impacting the Lives of North Dakotans with Disabilities—VR at Work".*



## Community of Practice Continued Below

### Recognizing Success

Dave epitomizes the independence and “can do” attitude of people in North Dakota’s small towns. He attended Wahpeton State College of Science and worked for an automotive dealership as a “parts man” for 10-12 years. He started and operated a successful off-sale liquor store and became a self-taught demolition / explosives expert.

But when Dave came to VR, he was literally broke financially and physically. He said when he walked into the VR office, he began to feel like a special person. Through assessment, VR identified

Dave’s need for glasses and hearing aids. VR supported his initial goal to gain his realtor’s license. But Dave, newly sober, no longer wanted a job stressful enough to jeopardize his sobriety. He and his VR counselor discussed some new ideas. They came up with the concept that maybe Dave could operate a sewage pumping business. Dave didn’t know if he could physically handle the work, so his counselor asked him to help someone else who had a similar business. So, Dave ran a truck for about six months, and he knew he could do it.

With financial help from his father, Dave ordered a pumping truck that would fit his needs. He says, “If someone with a disability truly wants to better themselves, VR will give them the assistance, the guidance and the tools to succeed.”

Dave is now an active, participating member of the State Rehabilitation Council, representing business and the southwest part of the state.

*Full story in “15 Stories of Success—Impacting the Lives of North Dakotans with Disabilities—VR at Work”.*

*(Continued from page 14)*

transition. The state and regional communities, as well as other state Community of Practice groups will be able to share information and ideas through SharedWork, a website established by the IDEA partnership.

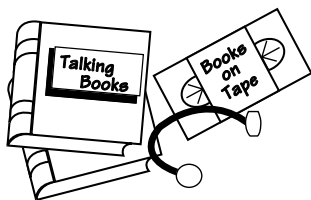
An additional collaboration between DPI, ND Center for Persons with Disabilities (NDCPD), and VR resulted in a revision of the “Taking the Next Step” Transition CD. The CD outlines the roles and responsibilities of students, parents and educators in the transition process. The original CD addressed the transition process from high school to higher education. A new chapter was added to address transition from high school to the workforce.





## Older Blind Services

***The purpose of Older Blind Services is to provide training, accommodation and support in daily living activities to individuals with visual impairments so they can maintain independence in their home environment.***



Vision rehabilitation specialists provide services throughout the state. Services may include: orientation and mobility training, communication skills training, activities of daily living training, low vision screening, assistive technology devices, counseling, community integration, management of secondary disabilities, transportation, readers and guides, support groups and referral.

- 1,109 individuals 55 and older received one or more services during FFY 2008.
- 90% of consumers identified goals were achieved; the remainder are in progress.

*"The VR program aided me in what I hope was the lowest point in my life."*

Comment from VR Satisfaction Survey

## Recognizing Success

Tina did not let her disability, a general anxiety disorder, stop her from going to college and working the in the field she loves—computer technology. Her philosophy is, "Everything that doesn't kill us makes us stronger."

Tina's VR counselor began to help her by alleviating a lot of her stress and worry. It was difficult to make ends meet. Because driving to school was part of her employment plan, VR helped to pay a portion of

car repairs. Tina's VR counselor helped her get grants, college loans and childcare assistance. When she and her husband were both hospitalized on a number of occasions and had no health insurance, VR was able to assist with some expenses.

Tina has now graduated from college, and is satisfied with the work she is doing as an office manager at a grain elevator. Her income has increased, and all her hard work is paying off.

"It's challenges that make this world interesting. You look back and wonder how you did it. I think it's important to be an example for your kids. You need to show them you can complete things and make yourself and your life better. I now have the skills to handle different things that come up. I'm more confident, and I think better about who I am."

*Full story in "15 Stories of Success—Impacting the Lives of North Dakotans with Disabilities—VR at Work".*





## Statewide Independent Living Council and Independent Living Services

***The purpose of Independent Living Services is to eliminate barriers and provide assistance to individuals with disabilities so they can live and work more independently in their homes and communities.***

In addition to the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), North Dakota has a Statewide Independent Living Council (SILC) whose members are appointed by the Governor. The mission of the SILC is to guide the development of the independent living system in North Dakota through the active involvement of people with disabilities.

The SILC has a representative on the SRC, but the SILC's responsibilities are separate and distinct from those of the SRC. A three year Independent Living State Plan is jointly signed by the President of the SILC and the Director of Vocational Rehabilitation. In addition, the SILC, with VR, determines how independent living funds will be allocated in the state.



North Dakota has four CIL's:

- **Dakota Center for Independent Living** - Bismarck
- **Independence Incorporated** - Minot
- **Options Center for Independent Living** - Grand Forks/East Grand Forks
- **Freedom Resource Center for Independent Living** - Fargo

Dakota, Independence and Freedom have branch offices in Dickinson, Williston and Jamestown, respectively; and Options has an outreach office in Cavalier.

Each Center for Independent Living provides many services including a set of core services: information and referral, peer counseling, independent living skills training, and self and systems advocacy.

- This past year, with federal and state funds authorized by the North Dakota legislature, 8,198 people had contact with a Center for Independent Living.
- Of these, over 2,743 people received one or more of the core services.
- Some individuals identified specific goals for living independently. 94% of those goals were achieved; the remainder are in progress.



*"The only way to do things the right way was to do it with VR."*

Comment from VR Satisfaction Survey



## The Client Assistance Program

***The purpose of the Client Assistance Program (CAP) is to provide advocacy, rights protection, consultation, education, information, and referral for individuals who are seeking or receiving rehabilitation services so they can resolve issues and receive the services for which they are eligible.***

◆ Programs served:

### North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation

#### Tribal Vocational Rehabilitation

- Sitting Bull Vocational Rehabilitation, Fort Yates, ND
- Turtle Mountain Vocational Rehabilitation, Belcourt, ND
- Spirit Lake Vocational Rehabilitation, Fort Totten, ND
- Three Affiliated Tribes Vocational Rehabilitation, New Town, ND



*Dennis Lyon, Director  
Client Assistance Program*

#### Independent Living Services

- Dakota Center for Independent Living - Bismarck
- Independence Incorporated - Minot
- Options Center for Independent Living - Grand Forks/East Grand Forks
- Freedom Resource Center for Independent Living - Fargo

*"Thank you for being  
there for me when I  
needed help the  
most..."*

Comment from CAP Survey

◆ During FFY 2008:

- Responded to 350 information and referral calls.
- Provided training to 265 people at 18 public education sessions.
- Resolved 99% of the issues without going to a Fair Hearing.

**More about CAP at:  
<http://www.nd.gov/cap>**



## Glossary of Acronyms Used in This Report

<b>ADA</b>	Americans with Disabilities Act
<b>AT</b>	Assistive Technology
<b>CAP</b>	Client Assistance Program
<b>CIL</b>	Center for Independent Living
<b>CRC</b>	Certified Rehabilitation Counselor
<b>CSAVR</b>	Council of State Administrators of Vocational Rehabilitation
<b>DBTAC</b>	Disability and Business Technical Assistance Center
<b>DHS</b>	Department of Human Services
<b>DPI</b>	Department of Public Instruction
<b>FFY</b>	Federal Fiscal Year
<b>IDEA</b>	Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
<b>IL</b>	Independent Living
<b>IPE</b>	Individualized Plan for Employment
<b>NDCPD</b>	North Dakota Center for Persons with Disabilities
<b>NDSRC</b>	North Dakota State Rehabilitation Council
<b>NDVR</b>	North Dakota Vocational Rehabilitation
<b>NIHS</b>	National Indian Health Service
<b>RCS</b>	Rehabilitation Consulting and Services
<b>SILC</b>	Statewide Independent Living Council
<b>SRC</b>	State Rehabilitation Council
<b>SSA</b>	Social Security Administration
<b>VR</b>	Vocational Rehabilitation





**Vocational Rehabilitation  
At a Glance  
FFY 2008**

*Pages 24 and 25*

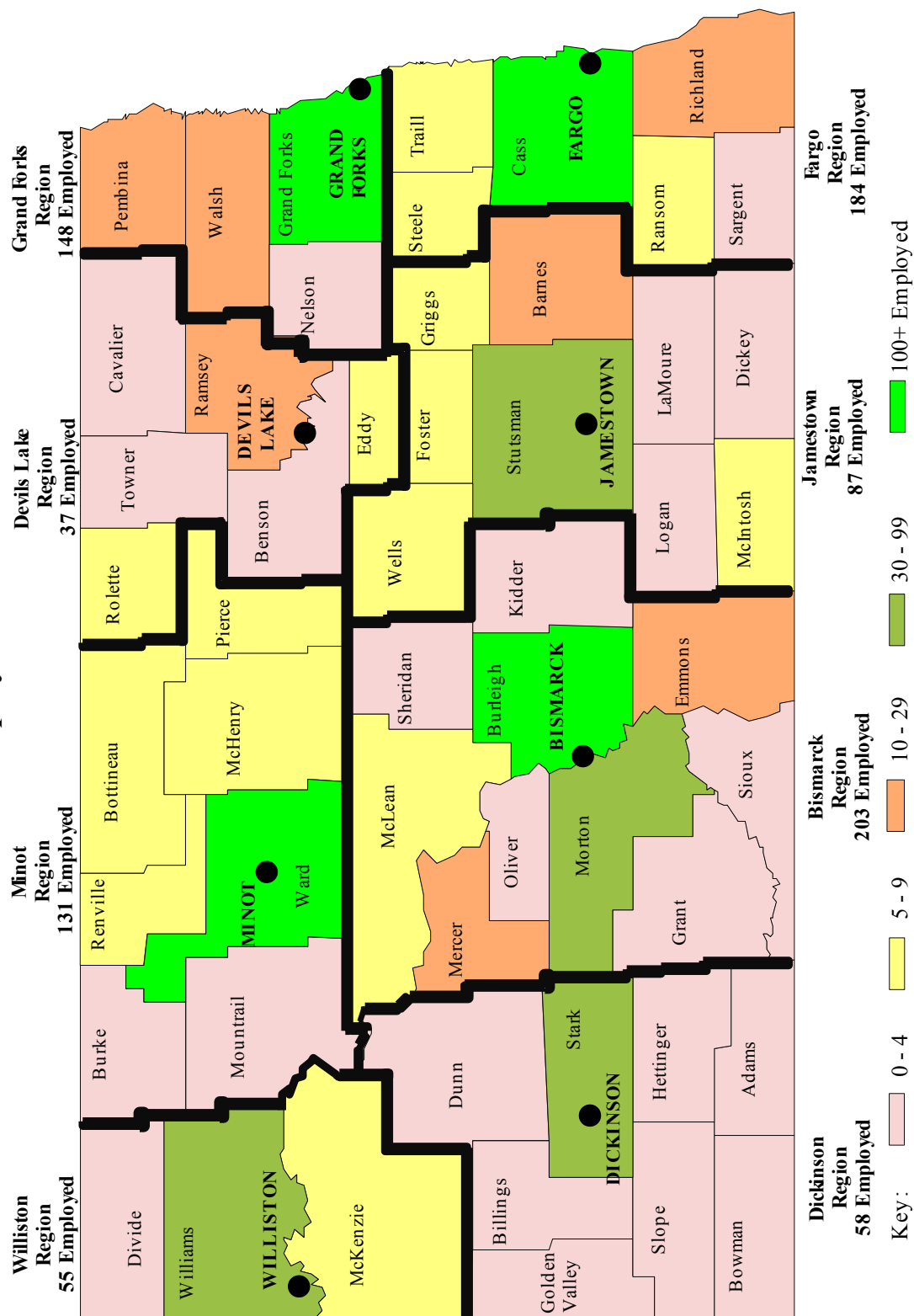
**North Dakota Maps**

*Pages 23 and 28*

**State Rehabilitation Council  
Membership**

*Pages 26 and 27*







## Vocational Rehabilitation at a Glance FFY 2008

### ***Sources of Program Funding***

Federal Funds	\$ 9.68 Million
State & Other Funds	2.62 Million
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$12.30 Million</b>

### ***VR Employment Services for Individuals with a Disability***

People Completing Training and Becoming Employed	903
Average Weekly Earnings <u>Before</u> Rehabilitation	\$ 92.92
Average Weekly Earnings <u>After</u> Rehabilitation	\$ 377.46
People Receiving Training and Other Services	6,472
Percent of Individuals With a Significant Disability	88%

### ***Additional Vocational Rehabilitation Programs & Services***

#### **Business Services**

Contacts initiated by VR with  
North Dakota Businesses 2,462

Contacts initiated by North Dakota  
Businesses with VR 459

#### **Independent Living Services**

People Receiving Services 8,198

#### **Older Blind Services**

People Receiving Services 1,109

#### **Client Assistance Program**

Information and Referral Calls 350

Cases Managed 47

### ***Supporting Private Sector Organizations in North Dakota***

**Private Community Rehabilitation Programs** **\$202,808**

(Non-profit & for profit organizations located throughout the State that  
provide services such as supported employment & vocational  
development)

**Other Private Vendors** **\$ 5.5 Million**

(Hospitals, private physicians, psychologists, retail stores, transit  
companies and others)



### **Cost Benefit**

**For every \$1.00 spent by VR,  
Clients will pay back \$2.01 in taxes.**





## Vocational Rehabilitation At a Glance FFY 2008

### ***Types of Disability of Individuals Employed***

Mental Illness	26%
Orthopedic	16%
Learning Disabilities	15%
Hearing Impairments/Deafness	13%
Mental Retardation	10%
Other (Nervous System, Respiratory, Cardiac, GI)	8%
Substance Abuse	6%
Visual Impairments/Blindness	3%
Traumatic Brain Injury	2%
Amputation	1%

### ***Employment Placements***

Professional/ Business, Management	22%
Service	19%
Office & Administrative Support	15%
Healthcare Support, Personal Care	9%
Sales	7%
Transportation & Material Moving	7%
Production	6%
Installation, Maintenance, Repair	6%
Construction	5%
Agricultural	3%
Homemaker	1%

### ***Types of Service Expenditures***

Training & Supplies	65%
Treatment & Restoration	11%
Diagnosis & Evaluation	7%
Maintenance	5%
Transportation	4%
Aids & Equipment	3%
Small Business	2%
Job Referral/Placement	2%
Other	1%

*"[My counselor] was highly instrumental...to help me see there was a light at the end of the tunnel. She kept working with me even when I was not responsive."*

**Comment from VR Satisfaction Survey**



## STATE REHABILITATION COUNCIL

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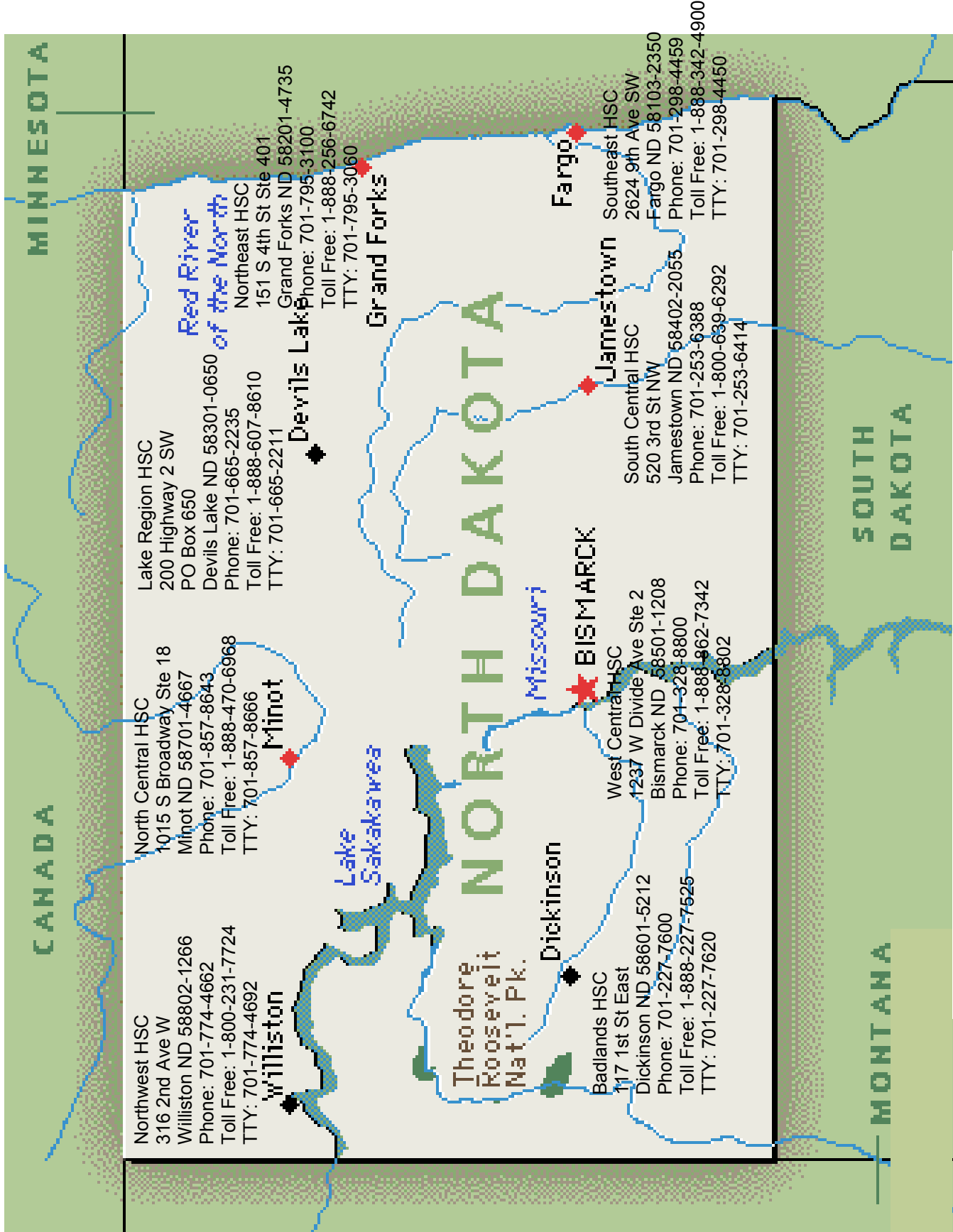
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## Regional Human Service Centers



# Notes





# Notes







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**<http://www.nd.gov/dhs/rcs>**

**This website contains a brief overview of the entire VR process from application to post employment services. It also contains forms, information on related programs, and links to the State Plan and various RCS publications and videos.**

**Available in alternate format upon request.**